

Christ the Coming One: King

2 Samuel 7:1-17

Authority: Inherently Bad?

It seems there has been a growing mindset in our culture that authority is inherently bad. That's the air we breathe in the current cultural climate more than ever. Many are at best skeptical of those in authority, and at worst, view their authority as an inherent problem.

At the risk of oversimplification, I think there are a few reasons for this. One is the development of what has been called "expressive individualism." Which is another way of saying, "I am my own authority. No one can tell ME what to do. What I *feel* is true. What I *want* is always good. What I *believe* is always right. I'm in charge of me." So naturally, all authority outside of me is a problem!

But there's another reason why there seems to be a growing trend of skepticism towards those in authority, and it's simply the fact that a lot of people in authority ARE bad! Through the rise of social media and other forms of communication

outlets, many people in authority have been exposed. They've abused their authority. They've used their authority to TAKE from others for selfish gain rather than to give for the good of those under their care.

- How many politicians have been exposed to bend on their convictions or blatantly lie in order to secure more votes?
- How many police officers have been exposed in abusing their power over those they're called to protect?
- How many pastors and religious leaders have been exposed in taking the chastity of minors for their own sick pleasure?

So the growing wave of belief in the inherent badness of authority doesn't come from nowhere. Some in authority ARE bad. Now, of course, it is wrong to conclude that all authority is inherently bad and everyone in authority is bad because SOME are (or even MANY) are bad.

But it seems to me that, no matter where you fall on the spectrum of trust or distrust towards authority, you're probably tired of all the abuse of authority out there. And if you're like me, you long to see those in authority GIVE THEMSELVES

for the sake of those under their care, rather than TAKE from them.

God's Promise of a Forever King

We have embedded within our souls, a longing to be under the care of good authority. God knows it...because God designed it. That's why this promise in 2 Samuel 7 is so amazing.

We've been working through a series called "Christ the Coming One" that has focused on the threefold office of Jesus: Prophet, Priest, and (this morning) King. The OT people of God anticipated a coming King who would NOT take from the people for selfish gain, but he would GIVE himself to the people for their good.

In 2 Samuel 7, God makes one of the most essential and foundational and crucial and hope-giving promises in all the Bible. One person said this passage is "the most crucial theological statement in the Old Testament." (Brueggemann, 259) It contains a promise that is vital to our understanding of the story of the Bible as a whole and it is one of the essential

components of the Christian faith—a King will reign FOREVER over God’s people!

Through the prophet Nathan, David and God have a conversation with each other—but God is doing most of that talking. The conversation unfolds in two main parts. That’s how this passage is structured. It’s structured in this contrast between what David wants to do FOR God and what God promises to do FOR David.

And that contrast leads us to this truth: *God gives us a King who gives us himself for our good.* God is the GIVER in the relationship, we are the receivers. And what he gives us is a giving King. So let’s look at the first part of the contrast in this conversation...

David’s desire to build God a house. [vv1-2]

Do you see what David’s desire is? It’s implied in the dilemma he feels in v2 when he says, “I’m living in a really nice house, but the ark of God dwells in a tent.” What does he wanna do? He wants to build a “house” for the *ark*. What’s the ark? As you may know, it was that gold plated wooden chest that contained the two tablets of

the written Ten Commandments given by God to Moses.

But the ark was more than that! It wasn't just a fancy chest that served as storage space for God's written law. It represented the Lord's very presence on earth. In Exodus 25, after God gave instructions on how he wanted this ark built, he said this to Moses, "*There* [at the ark!] I will MEET with you, and from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubim that are on the ark of the testimony, I will SPEAK with you..." (Ex. 25:22) One person said, "...*the ark was...the focal point of God's actual presence among his people...*" (ESV Study Bible, 498)

Now this is important to know because David had just experienced the thrill of bringing the ark to its rightful place in Jerusalem. It was captured by the Philistines (1 Sam. 4), and then it eventually made its way back to Israel, but wasn't yet in the city of the king, Jerusalem. Ch6 records the account of the ark being brought to Jerusalem; and David is ecstatic, overwhelmed with joy. WHY? BECAUSE the very presence of God himself is now in the city of the King.

BUT, still, David sensed something was lacking. The ark (and therefore, God) didn't have a house, a place, a temple to reside in. And when David considered all the Lord had done for him—given him a resting place in a beautiful palace and rest from his enemies...and he compares that to what the Lord has for himself—no house/temple...no resting place—he thinks, “This isn't right.” As one person said, “It seemed inappropriate to David for an underling to be living in greater luxury than his divine master.” (Bergen, 335)

Now, it was common in the ANE for kings to honor their gods with a house/temple. And David wanted to do something like that for the true God. “God had given me so much already; let me do something for him.” Is that bad? Is that a bad instinct? Of course not. But it is our instinct. Even Nathan, the prophet, approved of it! **[v3]**.

Nathan gave God's approval (“the Lord is with you”) for something he didn't yet consult God about. Why? I think it's because it really seemed like a natural thing to do. When someone gives

us something, we often feel compelled to balance their generosity out with a return of our own generosity. It's instinctual. And our relationship with God is no different. Our instincts are often, "Based on what God has done for me, what can I do for him in return?"

I have found that we have such a hard time wrapping our heads around the idea of "pure grace." God gives and we don't pay him back. It's pure grace.

One of our members has been going around asking other members, "What's the best all time Christmas movie?" Some said, "Home alone." Others have said, "It's a Wonderful Life." It's still debated whether "Die Hard" is even a Christmas movie.

But I guarantee NO one said their favorite Christmas movie is "Christmas with the Kranks." It's as cheesy as they get. BUT there is a scene in it that got me. The main character, named Luther, decided to take his wife on a cruise for Christmas instead of participating in all the Christmas shenanigans, because their daughter

wasn't going to be in town for Christmas. This made the whole neighborhood upset because they were the one grinch house that was skipping Christmas.

Well, last minute, their daughter decides to come home, and that meant that Luther couldn't go on his cruise. So he decides to give the tickets to an elderly couple across the street. And the exchange went like this....

- *Luther: "Our daughter is gonna be staying with us for ten days so we're not taking the cruise, and Norah and I would like you guys to have it...It's ten days in the Caribbean, islands and beaches, the works. It's a dream vacation."*
- *Walter (elderly man), "Luther, we can't take it. It's not right."*
- *Luther said, "I didn't purchase the travel insurance. So if you don't take it, the whole package is wasted."*
- *Then they come up with a bunch of excuses, like, "What are we gonna do with the cat?"*
- *And Luther says, "This is from us to you. This IS a sincere, heart-felt, no strings attached, Christmas offering..."*

- *Elderly man, “Well, what’s it cost? If we decide to go, we wanna reimburse you?”*
- *Luther says, “This is a simple gift, Walter. No costs, no payback. Don’t make it complicated.”*

At that point, I turned to my wife and said, “That’s a picture of the gospel.” And we try to complicate it. God really is a giver! Sincere, heartfelt, no strings attached, no cost, no payback.

You may not be a Christian yet. Could the reason be that you are complicating the free offer of salvation? Like, “It’s too good to be true.” Or “I gotta make sure I got all my ducks in a row before I can receive the full payment of pardon for all my sins.” Don’t make it complicated!

Christians, can’t we fall into this trap? We often view good works in the Christian life as payback to God for his grace. That’s not the point of good works. We can’t pay God back! If we think we can we are woefully underestimating the value of his grace towards us! *That would be like throwing a penny towards the national debt of 31.32 trillion dollars.*

We do good because our hearts have been transformed by his infinite FREE gift of grace! God is a GIVER. He LOVES to give out of the overflow of who he is.

No doubt, David had sincere motives in wanting to give to God, but he fell into that tendency we all have. And we know that's what he fell into because the Lord comes to Nathan immediately to correct him. Which leads to the second part of the contrast...

God promises to build David a house. [vv4-7]

See the Lord's point? "I never asked to be built a house! I'm not like the false gods of the surrounding nations. I'm not a taker. I'm a giver." And God goes on to remind David of the promises he already gave to him and to his people. **[vv8-11a]**

"This is what I do, David! This is the kind of God I am! I GIVE to my people. No strings attached. I'm not needy! They need from me...YOU need from me, David." And so, God reminds David, not only what he has done for him personally—taken him from being a lowly

shepherd to being the King of Israel—but he also reminds David of what he has already promised in the past. He re-promises things that have already been promised. See that? **[v9, “great name”; v10 “dwell in your own place”]**

Where have we heard that before? Remember what God promised Abraham? Gen. 12, “Go...to the LAND I will show you...I will make your name great.” That same covenantal promise given to Abraham is now passed on to David. “I’ve not changed, David. I’m a giver. I’ve been giving to my people since the day of their conception. And I will fulfill all the promises I ever gave. And yet, you wanna give me something? You need from me, David. I don’t *need* from you.”

That’s the kind of God we all need—a God who is NOT NEEDY. If the supreme authority over all the world was *needy*, think of how unstable those under his authority would be? This is why so many people are skeptical of authority. It always seems they’re trying to GET something for themselves. They’re using those under their authority to give to themselves something that

they lack in themselves: emotional fulfillment, recognition, respect, love, value. And that's why those under their authority feel so unstable.

Aren't you thankful that God is not NEEDY? It is good news for you that he doesn't NEED you AND that he's a GIVER. If he was just self-sufficient but not a giver, then he would neglect you. But if he was a giver AND needy, then you'd constantly have to walk on eggshells to try to pay him back for all he's given you.

God is fundamentally a giver who is not needy. That's good news. And that's what God reminds David of. Notice how he takes it a step further.
[v11b "Moreover/in addition to"]

"I'm not gonna let you build me a house, David. I'm gonna build YOU a house. I'm the giver in the relationship because I don't need anything."
Now, what kind of house does God have in mind? It can't be another palace; David already has one. Look at **[v12]**

That's the kind of house God will build David—not one made of cedar; but a

dynasty/kingdom that will remain FOREVER. Did you notice the language in v12, “I will **raise up** your offspring.” That’s significant! There’s something unique about the King who would sit on the eternal throne. He will be **raised up** by God! Could that be why his throne is eternal? **[v13]**

It's in the singular. “HE will build a house for my name...I will establish HIS throne.” Who ended up building a house for God? *Solomon*, David’s next son. But did God really mean that Solomon would be the King over God’s people FOREVER? Certainly, at one level, what is in mind here is the succession of Kings who come after David from David’s line. Look at the language of **[v14]**

Every kin in Israel was viewed as a “son of God.” Not in a divine sense, but a relational sense. And we know that because v14 says these kings would sin. There’s an anticipation that the kings to come are gonna fail. What will that mean for this promise that David’s kingdom will have no end? It will mean that God will punish their sins in such a way that the promise will remain. Notice what he goes onto say in **[vv15-17]**

That sounds unconditional. BUT listen to how *Psalms 132* reiterates the promise: “The LORD swore to David a sure oath from which he will not turn back, ‘One of the sons of your body I will set on your throne.’” (Now, that sounds UNCONDITIONAL, right?) But then it says, “IF your sons keep my covenant and my testimonies that I shall teach them, their sons also forever shall sit on your throne.” That sounds CONDITIONAL!

Which is it? God says he’ll do it, so it has to be *unconditional*. But the promise was contingent upon the obedience of future “sons.” They represent God before the people. They need to be GIVERS, not takers.

The King was Meant to be a Giver

Did you know that was one of the key requirements of the King? The King was supposed to be a giver not a taker. Flip to Deuteronomy 17. (These were instructions given to the people of Israel before they had even entered the promised land regarding the kind of

King they should choose for themselves.) **[Deut. 17:14-17, pg.150]**

The King is to be a giver, not a taker. This was exactly how the first King of Israel, Saul, did NOT behave as a king. He was a taker! He looked out only for himself. He was all about building a kingdom for himself. It wasn't about God. (You can read about that in 1 Sam., which—by the way—we plan to teach on in our Adult SS class beginning in January.)

And that's why when David arose as the king, there was such relief. He was a giver. We saw it from the beginning! He volunteered as tribute to take on Goliath. Why? Because Goliath was mocking the living God and threatening the people of God. And David would not have it!

He was a giver...UNTIL he wasn't. Remember what he took for himself? (Or, I should say, "WHOM he took for himself"?) Bathsheba, another man's wife. And the blessing of David's kingship started to spiral downward from there.

Solomon was no better. He was a taker. He took for himself great wealth, 700 foreign wives, 300

concubines who led him to worship false gods. And nearly every King thereafter turned from the Lord. AND there was even a problem with the few godly Kings. They died! Their righteous dynasty didn't last forever!

Remember Josiah who found the book of the law of God that had been lost for years? He restored HIS commitment to the covenant God made to David, and in doing so, he restored the PEOPLE'S commitment... because the King represents the people. As it goes with the King so it goes with the people. But then he died...and the very next king, it says, "did what was evil in the sight of the Lord." And such evil continued from there.

And so, God's people were left hanging with the burdensome and nagging question: "Would there be a King who would represent God for us, keep God's law, and be a giver, not a taker?"

Christ Jesus, the Giving King

This is what we celebrate on Christmas! You can imagine how staggering it would've been for Mary, that young small-town Jewish girl, to hear

these words in Luke 1:31-33, "...behold, you [Mary] will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. He will be great [**Sound familiar? "I will make your name great."**] and will be called the Son of the Most High [**"I will be to him a father and he shall be to me a son."**] And the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." That's essentially a quote from 2 Sam 7!

Jesus is this final obedient son, who kept God's law. And the surprising truth about this final King was that HE took the chastisement, he took the whipping, he bore the stripes of discipline that God said he would give to disobedient Kings...JESUS was disciplined NOT for his own disobedience—because he never disobeyed—but for the disobedience of every King who came before him.

King Jesus is not a taker. He's a giver and he gave his very life! That's the good news of Christianity. Jesus died the death sinners deserved, so that sinners (like you and me) could

be TOTALLY forgiven of every wrong we've ever done. He GAVE himself for us. A FREE gift—sincere, heartfelt, no strings attached, no cost, no payback—FREE.

If you have yet to receive the gift of salvation that Jesus secured, would you do so? Don't complicate it!

- “But I'm so messed up.” The free gift isn't contingent upon how put together you are.
- “But I have to make myself better first to be more acceptable to God.” No, there's no cost to you—not even your moral improvements.
- “Ok I'll try to prove I'm worthy to receive it.” No, there's no payback.

“Then what's the catch?” you might ask. To which God would say, “There is no catch! It is a sincere, heartfelt, no strings attached offer of salvation and right standing with God from a good King who is a giver not a taker.”

The Risen King Took His Throne

He gave his life. He died. But wait, if the King died, then how can he reign on the throne

forever? Remember the promise God gave to David, “I will RAISE UP your offspring after you.”

It is not a coincidence that the apostle Peter, in his sermon in Acts 2, makes this very connection. Turn to **[Acts 2:29-36, pg.856; TEXT BELOW]**

“Brothers, I may say to you with confidence about the patriarch David that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. [He’s referring to what he just quoted from Psalm 16 where David says God would not keep his anointed one in the grave. Notice Peter’s interpretation...]

*30 Being therefore a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that he would set one of his descendants on his throne, [What’s he referring to? 2 Sam. 7!] 31 he foresaw and spoke about [WHAT???] **the resurrection** of the Christ, that he was not abandoned to Hades, nor did his flesh see corruption. This Jesus God [WHAT???] **raised up**, [What does that sound like? 2 Sam. 7:14, “I will RAISE UP your offspring after you.” SAME WORD*

here!] *and of that we all are witnesses. 33 Being therefore exalted at the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he has poured out this that you yourselves are seeing and hearing. For David did not ascend into the heavens, but he himself says, 'The Lord said to my Lord, "Sit at my right hand, 35 until I make your enemies your footstool."' 36 Let all the house of Israel therefore know for certain that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified."*

That's kingly language—"Lord and Christ"... "King and Messiah." "God raised him up!" How does Peter understand the promise of the Davidic covenant in 2 Sam. to be fulfilled? Is he not saying, "When Jesus rose from the dead and ascended to the right hand of the Father, he took his royal throne!"?

Isn't that the point?? Right now, Jesus is on the throne of David, ruling in heaven. And he will NEVER step down from that throne! Why? Because he rose from the dead, never to die again! And he promises to come back to this

earth and transform everything so that he will consummate his royal rule in the new creation.

Conclusion

We need this King!—A King who provides and cares for and protects and defends and looks out for NOT himself but for his people! A GIVING King.

Christmas is about a GIVING God who GAVE us a GIVING King who GAVE us his very life. Receive him as the greatest gift.